

Charter of the Technical Committee for Long-term Vital Signs Monitoring, Southwest Alaska Network

I. PURPOSE

This document establishes the procedures and guidelines under which the Southwest Alaska Network (SWAN) Technical Committee (Committee) for Vital Signs Monitoring will operate while developing and implementing a long-term monitoring program.

II. THE NETWORK

The Southwest Alaska Network (SWAN) consists of five units of the National Park Service. Katmai National Park and Preserve (KATM), Alagnak Wild River (ALAG), Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve (ANIA), and Lake Clark National Park and Preserve (LACL) are administratively managed as one complex by a superintendent based in Anchorage and support staff based in King Salmon and Port Alsworth. Kenai Fjords National Park (KEFJ) is managed by a superintendent and support staff based in Seward.

III. COMPOSITION AND ROLE OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The SWAN Technical Committee is comprised of the Chiefs of Resource Management and one natural resource scientist (two representatives) from LACL, KATM/ANIA, and KEFJ; and the SWAN Coordinator (chairman). The committee also includes four advisors that do not directly work for the parks, NPS Alaska Region I&M Coordinator; NPS Alaska Region Science Advisor; NPS-AKSO ecologist, and the USGS-BRD liaison to NPS for long-term monitoring. All members of the Technical Committee except the USGS-BRD representative are “voting” members. Membership of the technical committee should be reflective of the resource issues, management challenges, and ecological breadth encompassed by the Southwest Network. Administrative reorganization of parks in the network shall not diminish the role of Committee members or balance of representation.

The Chair and Committee reports to a Board of Directors (Network Park Superintendents, Regional I&M Coordinator, and Regional Science Advisor). The Committee is a linkage between scientists and managers, between NPS and other natural resource agencies, and its mission is to establish a shared vision of desired ecosystem conditions, for specifying how the vision can be achieved, and for monitoring and measuring progress toward goals. The Committee is a working group, decision-making, and technical oversight body. Other Park and Alaska Support Office (AKSO) scientists may be named by the Committee to participate in subcommittees, workshops, or attend Technical Committee meetings.

Specific ***responsibilities and tasks*** of Committee members include:

1. Compile and summarize existing information about park resources,
2. Determine the network's objectives and purpose in long-term monitoring,
3. Plan and conduct scoping workshops to identify potential monitoring strategies,
4. Develop a strategic monitoring plan,
5. Evaluate monitoring and research proposals, sampling designs, methods and protocols,
6. Provide guidance and support needed to sustain on-the-ground inventory and monitoring efforts,
7. Assist the Southwest Alaska Network Coordinator in the preparation of the Annual Work Plan and Annual Report,
8. Assist the Southwest Alaska Network Coordinator in planning and conducting periodic five-year Program Reviews.

IV. MEETINGS

Order of Business—(per agenda circulated in advance)

- I. Opening and objectives of meeting (Chair)
- II. Review of agenda and minutes of previous meeting (Chair)
- III. Most important organizational business (Committee)
- IV. Least important business, discussion and information items (Committee and guests)
- V. Meeting closure (on schedule)

Discussions-- All Committee members and guests recognized by the Chair may speak freely. The goal of each meeting is to have productive discussion in an informal atmosphere. Meeting discussions will be driven by an “action agenda” whereby individual members will lead discussions and solicit input from the Committee. Participation of Committee members will be required by use of round-robin techniques that allow each person to comment or pass. Discussion leaders will be designated by the Chair in advance of the meeting and given adequate time to prepare. Each agenda item will have a pre-assigned time limit that can be adjusted up or down. Should discussion on a matter run substantially over schedule, it will be refereed to a sub-committee or work group for a recommendation, or tabled until the next meeting.

Decisions-- Committee decisions will be made by consensus. Consensus occurs when each person on the committee feels that they have had a fair chance to influence the decision. Committee decisions and recommendation are founded upon informed consent whereby members who are not in favor of a potential committee position or decision can still accept and support the decision even though it may not be in the best interest of the individual member's park unit. Where consensus cannot be achieved, a record of the majority and minority opinions will be kept, and if appropriate, reported by the Chair to the Board of Directors. A controversial matter can often be resolved by people discussing their positions informally between meetings.

Quorum-- A quorum must be present for the committee to make decisions. A quorum is reached when at least one representative from each park is present.

Proxy-- A committee member may temporarily delegate his/her voting privilege (proxy) to another person or submit a written record (written proxy) or place a phone call to the chair identifying their position and/or voting intent.

Work Groups-- The Committee will make frequent use of work groups and may often rely on work group reports as a basis for action. All workgroups will be chaired by a member of the Committee and work group members must be approved by the Committee. A key function of work groups is to provide well-developed proposals for the whole committee to consider.

Frequency-- At least two “face to face” meetings of the Committee will occur annually. The frequency of other committee meetings will vary as the program transitions from the planning to operational stage. However, in all cases committee members must receive advance notice, an agenda and other information so they can participate effectively at meetings.

Deadlines-- Sustained interaction and commitment among members of the Technical Committee is essential for timely implementation and operation of long-term monitoring. The Chair will set deadlines for committee actions and products such as the review of documents and completion of plans. Committee members should recognize that failure to meet deadlines might delay receipt of program funding and undermine network credibility.

Documentation-- Minutes will be recorded during all meetings for a record of discussion and decisions.

Amendments—This charter can be amended at any time by consensus of the Committee.

Approval Signatures

Committee Member

Date

Chief of Resources Management,
Lake Clark National Park and Preserve

Biologist or Resource Management Specialist,

Lake Clark National Park and Preserve

Chief of Resources Management,
Katmai/Aniakchak National Park and Preserve

Biologist or Resource Management Specialist,
Katmai/Aniakchak National Park and Preserve

Chief of Resources Management,
Kenai Fjords National Park

Biologist or Resource Management Specialist,
Kenai Fjords National Park

Alaska Region I&M Coordinator

SW Alaska I&M Network Coordinator

Alaska Region Ecologist

Alaska Region Science Advisor